

## When to see a doctor?

See your doctor if:

- You have a weakened immune system and are experiencing symptoms of CMV infection. CMV infection can be serious or even fatal for people with weakened immune systems. People who have undergone stem cell or organ transplants appear to be at greatest risk.
- You develop a mononucleosis-like illness while you are pregnant.
- You know you were infected with CMV during pregnancy. The doctor will likely assess your baby for hearing or vision problems.



If you have a concern about your infant's hearing and speech development, please contact the: Guam EHDI Project Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, & Service (Guam CEDDERS) University of Guam, Office of Academic & Student Affairs, UOG Station Mangilao, Guam 96923  
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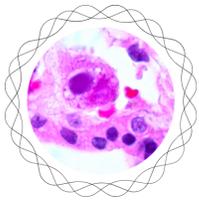
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# Understanding Cytomegalovirus (CMV)



## Protect Yourself and Your Unborn Baby



## What is Cytomegalovirus (CMV)?

- Cytomegalovirus is a common virus that infects people of all ages and is usually harmless.
- Once infected, it stays in your body for the rest of your life.
- Your immune system controls the virus, and most people don't realize they have it.
- People can also be re-infected with a different strain (variety) of the virus.
- Over half of adults have been infected with CMV by age 40.

## Congenital Cytomegalovirus

- When a baby is born with cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection, it is called congenital CMV infection.
- About one out of every 150 babies, are born with congenital CMV infection.
- About one in five babies with congenital CMV infection will have long-term health problems such as hearing loss, vision loss, small head size, lack of coordination, and in rare cases, death.
- In the United States, one in three children is already infected with CMV by age five.

## What causes CMV?

CMV is related to the herpes virus that causes cold sores, chicken pox, and mononucleosis.

When the virus is active in your body, you can pass the virus to other people. The virus is spread through body fluids — including blood, urine, saliva, mucus, breast milk, tears, semen and vaginal fluids. Casual contact doesn't transmit CMV.

## What are the signs and symptoms of CMV in adults?

Adults with weakened immune systems, might experience serious problems that affect your:

- Eyes
- Lungs
- Liver
- Esophagus
- Stomach
- Intestines
- Brain

Healthy adults who are infected with CMV may experience few if any symptoms. When first infected, some adults may have symptoms similar to infectious mononucleosis, including:

- Fatigue
- Fever
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches

## What are the signs and symptoms of babies born with CMV?

Babies who have congenital CMV who appear healthy at birth can develop signs over time, sometimes not for months or years after birth. The most common of these late-occurring signs are hearing loss and developmental delay. A small number of babies may also develop vision problems. Babies born with congenital CMV and who are sick at birth may have:

- Hearing loss
- Permanent visual impairment
- Premature birth
- Low birth weight
- Yellow skin & eyes (jaundice)
- Liver, spleen, and lung problems
- Purple skin splotches or a rash or both
- Small head size (microencephaly)
- Intellectual disabilities
- Pneumonia
- Seizures
- Coordination problems, cerebral palsy

## How is CMV transmitted?

- Sharing drinks and food
- Kissing
- Respiratory droplets (sneezing, coughing, spitting, drooling)
- Blood transfusion
- Breast-feeding
- Organ transplants
- Urine and feces
- Vertical transmission (in utero, during the birthing process)
- Sexual intercourse

## How can I prevent CMV?

Protect yourself and your baby by doing the following:

**Wash your hands often.** Use soap and water for 15 to 20 seconds, especially after touching a child's saliva or urine and especially after changing a child's diapers and wiping a child's nose, mouth, or tears. This is especially important if the children attend childcare.

**Avoid contact with tears and saliva when you kiss a child.** When you kiss a young child, try to avoid contact with saliva. Kiss the child on the forehead rather than the lips especially when you are pregnant.

**Avoid sharing food, drinking out of the same container, or other items as others.** Try not to put items in your mouth that have just been in your child's mouth (cups, forks, spoons, pacifiers, straws, toothbrushes).

**Be careful with disposable items.** When disposing of diapers, tissues and other items that have been contaminated with bodily fluids, wash your hands thoroughly before touching your face.

**Clean toys and countertops.** Clean any surfaces that come in contact with children's urine or saliva.

**Practice safe sex.** Wear a condom during sexual contact to prevent spreading CMV through semen and vaginal fluids.